



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

December 2014 VOLUME 5 ISSUE 12

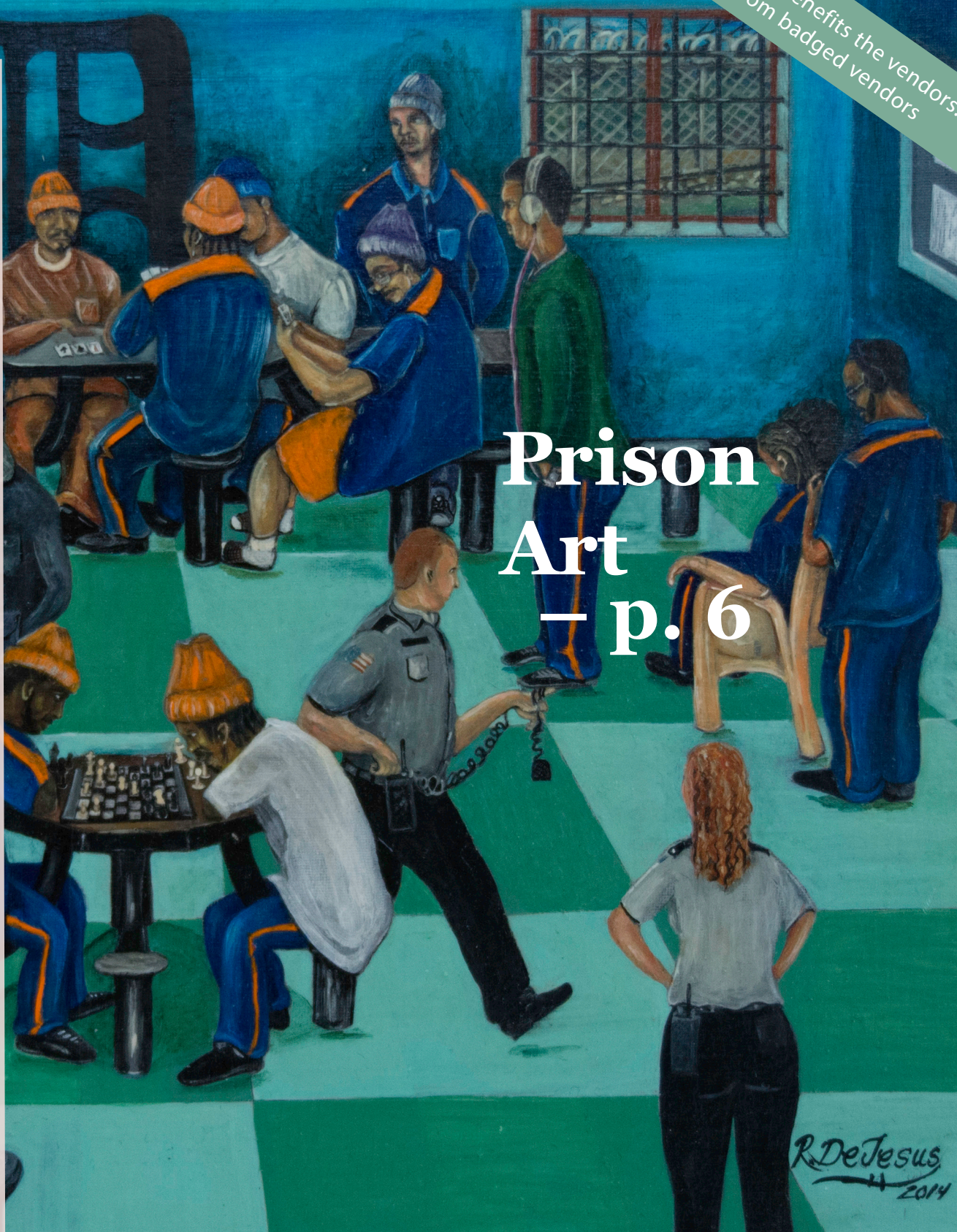
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Linked cities with mirror-image housing dilemmas



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

"Equity is a moral, psychic, self-preservation interest," said Mary Jo Callen, director of the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development (OCED).

The October 23 Community Conversation on Affordable Housing and Homelessness provided snapshots of where we've been, where we are, and – depending on what actions we take – various scenarios of where we will be with regard to housing and quality of life. The region in question comprised Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, Pittsfield Township and Ypsilanti Township, whose fortunes are entwined.

This was first underscored by former Ann Arbor Mayor Hieftje's statement that homelessness is a regional problem that can only be successfully addressed as such. Ann Arbor is a high-demand community that draws people from all income levels, and those who need help will gravitate toward towns and cities where help is available. Hieftje urged us to re-focus on putting people into housing, noting that though federal funds for affordable housing have dried up, the City of Ann Arbor makes line-item contributions to the Housing Trust Fund and contributes 50 percent of the profits of the sale of city-owned downtown properties to the fund. He pointed to the Carrot Way community, managed by Avalon, as an ideal affordable housing community that was strenuously opposed by neighbors when it was proposed. Hieftje suggested that re-development at Platt Road could result in another such community, and urged us to look for more such locations.

been this way, Roman reminded us that in the 1970s, it was residential displacement – also known as gentrification – that was the problem, not homelessness. There was actually a surplus of housing for those earning less than 30 percent of the Average Median Income (AMI), and rapid re-housing of those who lost their housing was the norm.

"For the majority of people, homelessness is an economic problem," said Roman.

A minimum wage earner needs to work 99 hours per week to afford the Fair Market Rate (FMR) of \$950 for a two-bedroom apartment. If evicted, they can be unhoused for years before they accumulate the thousands needed to pay the first and last month's rent required for a new lease. An initiative to prioritize rapid re-housing has helped reduce homelessness nationally by 17 percent. The problem is that you must be homeless to get help.

The solution, both nationally and in our region, is to increase affordable housing, both for middle-income workers and the poor. In an area like Ann Arbor, where demand and rent are high, the lower-rent properties are increasingly occupied by middle-income earners. Supply-side solutions include code variances that allow higher-density occupancy of houses,

tiny houses, mother-in-law apartments, and high-occupancy units in varied settings. This approach also includes preserving as low-income housing those sites that received tax credits to be developed as such, using the Housing Trust Fund to avoid foreclosures on a case-by-case basis, and imposing developer requirements that retail establishments built near transportation hubs must include housing units above the stores.

One lesson learned in the 1970s is that massive or concentrated low-income housing is not the answer. Housing projects residents were stigmatized and were often targeted by drug dealers. It is actually also more efficient to provide rental assistance than low-income housing. The Bipartisan Policy Center proposes that as part of comprehensive tax reform, all households with income under 30 percent of the AMI receive a Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) which would subsidize their rent such that they would generally pay between 30 and 40 percent of their income for housing. These subsidies would be paid for by limiting the home mortgage deduction to only one home and capping the mortgage amount eligible for deductions.

(It was mentioned several times that

see HOUSING, page 11

GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

Creating opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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Keynote speaker Nan Roman of the National Alliance to End Homelessness discussed the national scene, where there is a shortage of seven million affordable housing units and more than two-thirds of housed low-income renters are paying more than half their income for housing. Only one in four who are eligible for housing assistance receive it. Though it seems it has always

May we have accommodations, please?

by Elizabeth "Lit" Kurtz
Vendor #159

One word that dominates education is *accommodation*. Used primarily in special education to reflect differences in a child's learning style, it has also found its way into the mainstream classroom, both as a result of the integration of the special needs child and because many educators have realized that it just makes sense to prepare lessons that are flexible enough to reach every learner.

Accommodation, by definition, is a term that fits neatly into the demands of modern education. The causes for a child's obstacles to learning run the gamut from brain deficiencies to environmental causes. While much attention has been focused on learning deficiencies which result from birth defects and brain trauma, there seems to be lack of focus on environmental issues such as socio-economic factors and, most notably, homelessness. This is evident when a teacher made national news after sending notes to already-struggling parents that she would no

longer teach children with offensive odors in her classroom. Rather than recognizing this as an opportunity to tweak and adjust her lesson plan and classroom structure to reach this group of children, she threw up her hands in despair.

There is no place for whiners or those who throw in the towel at the slightest sign of differences. Children come from many different backgrounds. Some are not assured running water in their homes. Some have no homes.

First used by renowned education psychologist Jean Piaget, the term *accommodation* should be a "go to" for all educators when facing a challenge in the classroom. Educators should be about the business of finding resources for children while vigorously and frequently adjusting, even readjusting, lesson plans as accommodations require. It is shameful that there is a dearth of information and awareness among educators concerning children who lack such basic needs as food clothing and shelter. Education should be a leveling

ground where all children feel accepted and comfortable enough to take on the demands of learning. Accommodation ensures this.

The physical and psychological environment should be one that ensures that every child is granted the right to learn freely. Until educators accept that socio-economic differences bear as much weight on a child's ability to learn as do other impediments, children from families facing economic hardship will find it difficult to emerge from their plights and miss a quality education, which is perhaps the only opportunity in this country that guarantees a chance at success.

Suggested Education Environmental Accommodations Checklist for a Homeless Child

- Easy access to a snack
- Extra nap time
- Posted resources in school
- Space to leave extra school materials

I See You. I Am Here.



by Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell
Groundcover Contributor

There is a traditional greeting from the African bush that I occasionally use in ritual times, worship, and programs. It is a simple exchange between two people. The first person says: “I see you.” The second person responds, “I am here.” Often, there is power in this act rippling through a group, as people circulate around the room, from one to another, sharing this greeting.

“I see you” is an affirmation of one’s visibility. In my experience, visibility is a key element in our wholeness and wellbeing. Being invisible, unseen, or unrecognized can cut to our core.

In mid-November, I shared a marvelous night of visibility with members of the Groundcover News community.

Vendors, a few university students, several staff members, and a couple of volunteers came together for a Wild With Words (WWW) writing workshop. Every chair at the table was filled. By the time we left, we all knew a bit more about one another. We had enjoyed so many moments of seeing one another and stating with clarity that we were there.

WWW is a process of flow writing that I developed years ago as part of my academic work on internal authority in our spiritual lives. It is a process I have facilitated with varied groups for the last 15 years. It is accessible both to those who love writing and to those for whom writing is a chore. WWW is grounded in our common capacity to improvise, to create with what is at hand and with what is genuine within us. In this recent workshop, participants wrote and chose to read aloud short selections that were funny and tender, fanciful and full of realism, true in fact or in spirit. Each line on paper or resonating in the room revealed

something. People offered fragments of themselves to one another. A rich chorus of voices was heard. Bonds of community grew.

Writing-table times like this are magical for me. There is such sacredness in them. I left the Groundcover office grateful for everyone who was there and for the time we had together. I was already anticipating our next time to write on the other side of the snow that will soon be all around us.

My car was parked in the underground structure just north of the library. As I made my way to the north edge of the library, I came upon a woman in the dark. We acknowledged one another’s presence, and she said something about watching another person’s stuff. Then she looked up and said, “I know you. I’ve seen your picture. You write the column for *The Underground*. I’m a gardener, too.” “Yes, I am the columnist,” I answered. And then we told each other our names. What a gift it was, that unexpected “I see you. I am here” encounter!

I was amazed on a dark night that she remembered and was able to recognize me from a rather small picture in the paper. I was pleased she connected with the column several months ago about our monarch waystation gardening effort at my home in rural, northern Illinois. Her misnaming of the paper as *The Underground* was delightful. My column last month focused on the great stands of aspen that for acres and acres tend to spring from a single common root underground. Whenever we are part of “I see you. I am here,” we reinforce all that fundamentally holds us together.

My hope in this holiday season is that we writers, vendors, purchasers and readers of the paper, staff, and volunteers will give and receive the blessing of safe and cherished visibility however, wherever, and whenever we say and respond: “I see you. I am here.”

The psychology of giving

by Sara Konrath
Groundcover Contributor

The winter holidays are just around the corner, which means that lots of gifts will be given and received. According to the National Retail Federation, Americans spent an estimated \$602 billion on winter holiday gifts in 2013. To put this in perspective, in a two month period, Americans spent nearly two times the amount of money on holiday gifts than they donated to charity (\$335 billion) across the entire year.

Despite the fact that we are not immune to holiday overspending, scientists have puzzled over why people give, and how giving affects people’s happiness and health. There is a lot of research supporting that ancient wisdom that “it is better to give than to receive.” People who give their time and money to others in the form of volunteering or donating to charity are happier, healthier, and even live longer than those who do not. Research also finds that spending money on others, especially close ones, makes people happier than buying something for oneself. But research finds that people do not *think* this is the case – they expect that spending money on themselves will make them happier than spending on others. It turns out that it doesn’t really matter how much you spend or give to charity, which means that all of us can potentially experience a happiness boost after giving

– even if we only have a dollar to give. Funny, that happens to be the price of a Groundcover newspaper!

The biggest health and well-being effects on givers do not come from the amount of money that is spent, but on how and why it is given. For example, people experience a bigger health boost after giving if they are motivated by caring for others or wanting to help, instead of being motivated by what they can personally gain. So, is all lost because you now know that giving makes you happier and healthier? No, as long as the reasons for giving remain focused on others’ needs, with the happiness and health benefits just a nice side-effect. Other research finds that people are more likely to experience well-being boosts from giving to others directly in person, rather than indirectly. The holidays are a perfect time to do this, with local organizations needing extra volunteer support to care for our community members.

When it comes to giving to friends and family, other research also finds that giving experiences (e.g., museum visits, movie nights) makes people much happier than giving material objects to others (e.g., clothing, jewelry, gadgets). Don’t be fooled by the commercials with happy children opening shiny boxes. Those of us who are experienced parents know too well how quickly the children lose interest in the new toys,

but for how long do they talk about the time we took them on a train ride? (I am being literal here. My kids have not stopped talking about a single train ride they took months ago.) In my research lab, we have found that giving experiences to others makes givers feel closer and more connected to their loved ones, compared to giving material objects. This may be because experiences create strong memories that are talked about over and over again.

There are some gifts that are both material and experiential, and scientists have yet to figure out how those work. One good example is this newspaper, which is a material object, but at the same time, can be savored experientially – on a Saturday morning, with a nice cup of

coffee warming your hands.

This holiday season, give freely, and from your heart. And don’t forget to give to your Groundcover vendor. Groundcover gives vendors important, meaningful experiences – the experience of earning an income and the experience of being a valuable part of our community. Get to know your vendor’s name and story, and don’t forget him or her this year in your holiday giving.

Sara Konrath is a Research Associate at the University of Michigan’s Institute for Social Research and an Assistant Professor at Indiana University’s Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.

Worship this moment

by Shawn Story
Groundcover Vendor #42

Take a moment to think about what’s really important to you, what you have to do to put yourself in high regards with Him. Block out everything that is worrying you, and tell yourself that you are in control. Be grateful for what you have and cherish the things you work for.

Close your eyes and pray to your higher power for forgiveness, wisdom, and knowledge for things to come. With that thought, worship this moment.

Don’t worship the car, house, boat, or plane. Worship what He gave you: trees, plants, sun, water, and land. The love you have for someone or something is good, but you have to love yourself before you can love anyone else. So take the time and worship this moment.

Job 7:18: [What are human beings] ... You observe them every morning, and try them at every moment!

Meet Lit, – teacher, vendor, activist

by Ian Mark
U-M Student Contributor

Elizabeth Kurtz, or Lit (as she likes to be called), was born a part of the baby boom generation, and grew up in Albion, Michigan. Later, she graduated from Eastern Michigan University and went into teaching, which she has been doing for all of her life. She has an adult son, whom she raised as a single mother.

She taught at a couple of alternative education high schools in Connecticut for a few years, after which she returned to Michigan. In 1991, she lost her mother and her job within the span of a single year.

She was able to resume teaching up until September of 2012, when she lost her job. By February, she was evicted. At one point, she waited outside for 18 hours in the cold watching over her possessions to ensure they weren't

stolen. Since then, Lit has been unable to find stable housing. She spent some time at the Delonis Center, for which she is very grateful. Recently, she was able to access her pension and has been living in a hotel.

"I don't like that I had to cash my pension to survive, but I'm glad I had it," she says.

Throughout it all, Lit has maintained a remarkable attitude, always looking on the bright side and making the best of her situation. She says a positive attitude is "more freeing than debilitating." Additionally, living without stable housing has had an effect on her spirituality. "This has been an extremely spiritual experience for me. Having my son and being homeless have been the two most spiritual experiences for me."

In recent years, she has begun pursuing her passions, which include rapping and writing. As a lifelong English

teacher, she is passionate about literature. Some of her favorite writers include Shakespeare and Hemingway. She keeps a blog, where she can voice her opinions and express herself. An avid basketball player, Lit also makes it a point to stay active.

Lit admits that she can be overly ambitious at times. While learning to skateboard this July, she broke her wrist. However, she is still determined to get back to it. "Living on the streets has motivated me to do things differently."

Her ambitions also extend to charity efforts. She's a part of an organization which seeks to extend basic human rights to every individual in Michigan by 2020, and she plans on starting an organization promoting early literacy and academic enrichment.

Lit also suffers from major depression. Her first episode was when she was 34. Thankfully, she is able to keep it well-controlled with medication, exercise and eating right. She also credits her faith in God, citing that she comes from a very strong religious background. She says that now she rarely has an episode.

Lit claims that Groundcover has been an absolute lifesaver for her, citing how it has given her and numerous other vendors a way to make an honest living.

She was the first vendor to sell regularly at the YMCA, and she has built up an admirable customer base there. She says it has given her the opportunity to talk to a lot of people about Groundcover News, poverty, homelessness and many similar issues. She's very proud to be a vendor.

"We're working. Some of us work as vendors, some of us as writers, some of us as vendor-writers, and we're all proud of what we do. It's a job and we work hard at it. We need to be considered a valued part of the community, because we are."

"Groundcover has afforded me a wonderful opportunity to begin writing, and I'm grateful for that. I will probably always consider this a job, in one form or another, whether I sell it as my sole means of income, on the side, or if I just sell it to ensure that there is a presence of Groundcover."

Lit views her role as a vendor as very important, in representing individuals of different economic backgrounds and providing the community with an alternative news source. "There needs to be a presence even if people ignore us. There needs to be a presence so that we're part of the collective consciousness of society, of the community."

She gives me hope

by Eddy Powell
Vendor # 32

I love the way she gives me hope. She is a business woman who owns a store on Main Street in Ann Arbor, and I hope she knows how much she is helping me by being supportive of me selling Groundcover outside of her store. I like selling the paper and talking to people, and it also allows me to build a better future for myself. Some places where I have tried to sell the paper have given me some trouble. But not her; she always greets me with a warm smile that lets me know I can make it, because there will always be someone supportive around.

I've been working with and writing for Groundcover for over four years now. I first got involved with Groundcover because I like to work and interact with people, and selling the paper allows me

to put a smile on people's faces. I just like to see people happy. Sometimes it's a struggle, and not everyone will be able to understand your situation and offer support, but the people you can get through to make all the difference.

The support I receive from the business owner on Main Street allows me to move forward with my life and all my endeavors – like my music, for example. I love singing and playing music, and I like how music brings positive energy to your life. In the future, I hope to get another job and I am doing whatever I can to apply for different jobs, but there continue to be some obstacles I need to overcome: for example, getting to a job interview on the other side of town when you don't own a car. But I have a positive attitude and the supportive business owner on Main Street reminds me that there is always reason to have hope.

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Commonality promotes peace, justice and equality

by **Angie Martell**
Groundcover Contributor

As a holistic lawyer, I believe that we are called upon to serve as the gatekeepers of justice, upholding the rule of law, principles of democracy and foundational tenets of justice. I believe that it is incumbent upon us to also be advocates for equal justice under the law, and it is our duty to aid in empowering clients and promoting their self-reliance.

As Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. We are made to live together because of the interrelated structure of reality."

Our differences and our diversity is part of the fabric that makes this nation great. It connects us all and is the energy that enlivens our colorful world. Therefore, when we talk about equal justice, it is not merely a caption on the facade of the Supreme Court building; it is perhaps the most inspiring ideal of our society. It is one of the ends for which our entire legal system exists – it is fundamental that justice should be the same, in substance and availability, without regard to economic status, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, or age.

How can we realize this shared vision of social justice? The civil rights dialogue is often a difficult conversation. We live

in a nation with vast multicultural diversity, yet we also live in a nation that has been and often is divided.

We have enslaved and segregated individuals for the color of their skin, we have made women property, we have stolen lands from Native people, we have denied the right to marry to our Gay and Lesbian citizens, we have brutally institutionalized Deaf and Blind people, and we denied the rights of Transgender individuals. Why is it that so many of us have been relegated to second-class status in our own country because of the color of our skin, our gender, our national origin, our physical differences or our sexual orientation?

I often wonder what causes such polarization. Why is it that we as a nation have so much difficulty accepting one another and have stored so much anger against the other? What is the fear that causes us to distrust the other and seek solace in those that are the same as us?

Some say that, as human beings, we are only comfortable with those that are just like us. Some say the oppression that has been perpetrated against certain groups has caused a tremendous amount of anger and guilt. But I think there is more to it than just that.

War and peace start in the hearts of people. War begins when we harden our hearts. It begins when we have stopped listening to the other. It starts

when we objectify the other. If the hardening is left unattended, it can become prejudice or hatred. There is never peace unless somebody softens what is rigid in their heart.

Injustice harms everyone. It is harming those who are victims of oppression as well as those who are oppressing and abusing. There is nothing that causes more pain and suffering than being consumed by bigotry, cruelty, and anger.

The new civil rights discourse must start with compassion, forgiveness, apologies, and healing. Apology and forgiveness are sides of the same coin. Forgiveness is not forgetting, but rather, allowing our stories to be told so that we can see the pain, see the oppression, allow people to be heard, allow people to be responsible and accountable for their actions or inactions, and to allow the space to learn from this.

This does not mean that we close our eyes to the oppression we or others feel. What it means is that we don't allow our hearts to harden and reinforce our anger and self-righteousness with our thoughts, our words and actions. Only when we examine our own self-righteousness can we empathize with the other.

The holistic model of the new civil rights dialogue moves beyond feeling oppression, feeling guilt, feeling bitterness, and revisiting the years of oppression, and instead enters into a dialogue and finds a place where all voices can be heard; a place where everyone is whole, and where everyone has the ability to be themselves and create from that place of wholeness.

Healing, wholeness, and the power of creation must be part of the new civil rights discussion. I am not saying that oppression does not exist; what I am saying is that I, as a victim of oppression, need to begin to move beyond the label of victim, such as that I have

worn, and begin the dialogue of how to have equality in this nation and equal access to justice.

In this country, we need to learn to disagree with respect. We need to include accountability in our discourse. We need to look at things differently and answer the needs of people differently. One size does not fit all. We need to allow different viewpoints without judgment when we share and communicate. We have lost trust and common ground with one another. We need to look to what we have in common, rather than what divides us.

We need to learn not to take the bait. When we are triggered by someone we feel has wronged us, we take a defensive posture and our aggression is unleashed. Whenever we feel someone has wronged or harmed us, we fight back, but as Deepak Chopra says, "[e]very time you are tempted to react in the same way, ask if you want to be a prisoner of the past or a pioneer of the future."

Let us all today feed the vision of the world we want to live in. A world where everyone feels included, a world where differences are celebrated, a world where we can find peace, a world where lawyers and judges can integrate their minds and hearts into the law to bring integrity, balance and peace to the profession. As Gandhi said, "Be the change you want to see in the world."

Throughout history, this nation has been divided. It is presently divided. For the sake of our children, we need to learn to no longer water the seeds of prejudice, bias, and aggression. Let us teach our children to open our minds and hearts. Let us gather together and share our gifts and talents. Let us start to do things differently, so that we can truly create positive change in this great nation of ours by being the best we can be and, in so doing, contribute to peace on this planet.



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The art of transformation



From Prison Creative Arts Project:

Left: *The Way It Is!* by Raphael DeJesus (2014, acrylic)

Above: *The Struggle to Overcome an Infallible Trend* by Ronald Williams (2014, acrylic)

by Ross Bernhaut Groundcover Contributor

The United States of America has the highest incarceration rate of any country in the world. For every 100,000 members of the national population, 716 are behind bars. In other words, despite having just five percent of the world's population, the United States has 25 percent of the world's prisoners. So much for the "land of the free."

Locking up a sentient human being has always seemed to me a terribly inhumane form of punishment. The Prison Creative Arts Project, abbreviated as PCAP, is a local organization that strives to return some humanity to the lives of incarcerated persons.

Buzz Alexander founded the Prison Creative Arts Project in 1990. It is now housed in the University of Michigan's Residential College in East Quadrangle. Currently, PCAP has just four full-time faculty members and four full-time staff members, but over 300 active alumni. Ashley Lucas, the Director of PCAP, generously offered her time to sit down and speak with me about the organization, its successes, its challenges, and its hope for the future.

PCAP's ultimate goal is to better the community through fostering creative expression among the presently and formerly incarcerated population. The way PCAP accomplishes this is primarily through workshops on visual art, creative writing, and theater which they host at prisons under the

jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Corrections. Although PCAP only offers regular workshops for prisons within driving distance of the University, they offer programming to all adult state prisons in Michigan.

PCAP's workshops are all voluntary, and prisoners must sign up for them in advance. These workshops are treated as a privilege, not a right, as prison guards can determine a person's eligibility for the workshop based on their behavior. PCAP operates under the philosophy that art is a human right. In facilitating the creation of art, PCAP believes it is crucial to treat everyone equally, and thus tries not to know the crimes its participants have committed.

Two of PCAP's biggest annual projects are the Annual Exhibition of Art by Michigan Prisoners and the *Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing*. In spring of 2015, from March 25 through April 8, PCAP will be organizing its 20th exhibition. The art show will be hosted in the Duderstadt Gallery on the University of Michigan's North Campus. This exhibition, the largest of its kind in the world, includes over 500 artworks by 250 artists, and is free for public viewing. Once a year, PCAP visits every prison in the state to collect pieces for the art show. Artists new to the exhibition can display two works, while returning artists can exhibit up to three pieces.

When selecting artworks for the show, PCAP art show committee members

look for originality based on artistic vision. Lucas observed that nature is an especially common theme among the artworks because so many prisoners have been deprived of it for years. The great majority of subjects depicted must be imagined from the prisoner's memory. And that is one of the most impressive feats of these incarcerated

artists: recalling what a forest looks like after having gone a decade or more without seeing one.

PCAP's other chief undertaking is the

see PRISON RULES, page 9



St. Francis of Assisi PARISH

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"Catholic social teaching isn't only about dropping your spare change into a bucket at Christmas. Jesus calls us to a life that is daily marked by care and concern for the poor and for one another."

(US Conference of Catholic Bishops)

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Pressing charges

A man accused of assaulting numerous homeless people and their advocates is being evaluated for competency to stand trial and is being held on bail of \$50,100 until his next hearing on January 15, 2015. This man, Aaron Grace, was previously convicted in Lakewood, Ohio but fled before court-ordered medication was administered.

Fewer than half of those he attacked have come forward to press charges. It is unlikely that Grace will be extradited to Ohio and for the community's safety, it is important that all those he assaulted pursue justice in the courts, as that will increase the amount of time he is jailed.

A more detailed account of this man's terrorization of the community is being explored for future publication. Right now, coming forward, and protecting the safety of those who do, is imperative.



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Hours: Mon-Thurs 6am - 11pm • Fri-Sat 6am - 10pm • Sun 7:30am - 11pm

More beds and daytime shelter

Three Ann Arbor churches have teamed up with the Delonis Center to provide 50 more overnight beds and a daytime warming shelter from January through March. The locations will be staffed by the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County and funded by the city of Ann Arbor and the Washtenaw County Commissioners (pending a final vote on December 3).

Bethlehem United Church of Christ (located on 4th Avenue between William and Packard) will provide up to 50 beds in January. St. Mary's and will host up to 100 people on weekdays during the day. In February and March, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church (the "breakfast church" located on Division) and Crossroads Community Baptist (located on Packard Road between King George and Stone School) will take over the overnight hosting duties from Bethlehem.

The Delonis Center will act as the daytime warming shelter on weekends and will continue its normal 75-bed residential program, 50-bed overnight winter shelter and 25-bed Rotating Shelter.

Washtenaw County Selected for Federal Zero: 2016

Washtenaw County and 68 other U.S. communities to participate in Zero: 2016, a national campaign to end veteran homelessness by December 2015 and chronic homelessness by December 2016.

In a competitive, national application process. Washtenaw County stood out for its agreement to leverage real-time data for improvement and to work together across local agencies to get the job done. Selected communities will receive technical assistance and training to accelerate their housing efforts through four focus areas: closing the research-to-practice gap, real-time data and performance management, local systems redesign, and local team and leadership development. The campaign is spearheaded nationally by Community Solutions, which will provide hands-on coaching and data tools and will curate a national peer-to-peer learning network to accelerate innovation across communities.

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Sudoku ★★★★★☆ 4puz.com

		7	6				4	
8			7					6
5		9	3			1		7
7						9		2
			8	6	9			
4		1						8
6		3			2	8		5
2					3			1
	5				6	4		

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

Cryptoquote

JWUOPFZHU GBF JGDDZAB
 GBF DPDJZHAB GWU NAWU
 FGBVUWAPD CEGB CEU
 ZBHZCUNUBC AK DUSK-
 ZBCUWUDC AW CEU NADC
 DCPRAWB GFEUWUBHU CA
 WUGS FZKKUWUBHUD AK AJBZAB
 WUVGWFZBV WZVECD.
 — USZEP WAAC

ACROSS

1. Ali _____
5. European mountains
9. Mr. Jagger
13. Yemen's neighbor
14. Pelvic
15. Unemployed
16. Is this some obscure Latin phrase?
18. Interpret
19. Ancient document
20. Support organization (abbr.)
21. Tubers
22. Japanese writing
23. _____ justice
25. Proximate
27. Writing instrument
31. Postponement
35. Meaning
37. Container
38. Indict
40. Monstrous
42. Clergymen
43. European mountain
45. Response envelope (abbr.)
46. Impassive
48. Selves
50. "And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour forged for proof _____"
52. Meccan
56. Summery
59. Assist
60. One who is noisy during somnolence
62. Assessment
63. Triangular wall that tells time too?
65. Singing voice
66. Maryland town
67. Loam
68. Sharp
69. Moon of Neptune
70. Playing card

DOWN

1. Musicians' equipment
2. Uncontrolled
3. Iraqi city
4. Actor Williams
5. _____ fours
6. Distillery products
7. Hesitate
8. Scampers

Steel yourself for — Celebrity Puns

1	2	3	4			5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
13					14						15			
16				17							18			
19						20					21			
	22					23				24				
				25	26				27			28	29	30
31	32	33	34		35			36		37				
38				39				40	41					
42						43	44				45			
46					47		48			49				
			50			51				52	53	54	55	
56	57	58			59				60					61
62					63				64					
65					66						67			
68					69						70			

9. Ancient emperor stuck in the mud?
10. I have no _____
11. Aquatic creature
12. Parasitic insects
14. Evil
17. Verve
23. Pamphleteer of the American Revolution
24. Chafe
26. Breakfast food
28. Priest
29. Eighth day (of a festival)
30. Samoan coin
31. _____ Club, retailer
32. Horse's gait
33. Tuscan river
34. Ruminant citrus?
36. Barely discernible quality

39. Interrogative words
41. Sodium oxide (chemical formula)
44. Body tissue
47. Clergyman
49. Vocalized
51. Lunar topographical feature
53. Cook
54. Grove
55. Repudiate
56. Diluted
57. Car part
58. Assess
60. Firmament
61. Have faith
64. White collar worker (abbr.)

Puzzle by Jeff Richmond

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1, or the face value of the paper. I agree not to ask for more than face value or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell

to or buy papers from other Groundcover News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to:
contact@groundcovernews.com
 734-707-9210



Bethlehem United Church of Christ

423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, MI 48104

(between William and Packard)

(734) 665-6149

Bethlehem Church is the home of the Groundcover office.

Sundays:

8:30 am and 10:00 am - Worship Services

10:15 am – Sunday school

Fellowship Hour follows each service

Upcoming Community Events

Sat., Dec. 6

Sun., Dec. 7

Sun., Dec. 14

Fri., Dec. 19

Sun., Dec. 21

Wed., Dec. 24

Ann Arbor Symphony "Sing Along with Santa," 1:30pm
 Ann Arbor Youth Chorale concert at Bethlehem, 2:00pm
 Bethlehem's Children's Christmas Pageant, 10:00am
 German Pretzel Sales, 11am-2pm, \$1 each or \$10 dozen
 Blue Christmas service, Bethlehem Sanctuary, 4:00pm
 Christmas Eve Service at Bethlehem
 5:00pm Family Christmas Service
 7:30pm A Musical Christmas Celebration
 11:00pm Candlelight Service with Communion

www.bethlehem-ucc.org

www.facebook.com/bethlehemucca2

www.pinterest.com/bethlehemucca2

www.youtube.com/user/BethlehemChurchA2

Prison rules limit artists

continued from page 6

Michigan Review of Prisoner Creative Writing. A collection of prisoners' poems, memoirs, short stories and essays is published annually, with the 2014 anthology entitled *The Sky is on Fire, After All*. Each year, hundreds of works of verse and prose are submitted. PCAP scrupulously ensures that every writer gets a real letter with personalized feedback on his or her work. While certainly an arduous task, providing meaningful commentary for each piece is critical for helping the writers grow and improve. And the copious effort invested in producing the literary review is conspicuously evidenced by the thoughtfully pointed and intensely moving writings that are published.

One project PCAP is currently developing is an online database of digital images of the more than 4,500 art pieces that have been generated in conjunction with PCAP programming. PCAP was awarded the University's MCubed Grant for this project, which is helping fund the endeavor. The plan is to eventually have all of these images accessible to the public on the

University of Michigan's library website. However, none of the artwork will be catalogued online without consent from the artist.

Even with PCAP's remarkable success, there are still many challenges the organization faces. One such challenge is the censorship by the prisons of what PCAP can bring into the prison space. The people facilitating PCAP workshops often like to show the inmates examples of artworks by some of history's most influential artists. But no nude images are allowed into the Michigan prisons, which rules out reproductions of some of the greatest works of art ever made. Prisoners are also limited in what materials they can use. For example, they are not allowed scissors, oil paints, or fixatives for pastel or chalk drawings, although with the artists' permission PCAP can apply fixative to their works outside of the prisons.

On a larger scale, PCAP recognizes its own limits as an organization. The programming and resources PCAP has to offer are incredibly beneficial to incarcerated persons, but are inadequate to provide holistic support

for people undergoing the difficult process of re-entry into society. Nevertheless, PCAP welcomes released artists to participate in its various art programs and does everything within reason to assist formerly imprisoned artists in cultivating their artistic pursuits.

Ultimately, PCAP is such a powerful and meaningful organization because it is instrumental in transforming peoples' lives. The process of creating art involves not only the physical transformation of nature, but also the mental transformation of the artists. Making art allows Michigan's incarcerated people to develop a new identity, recognize their own and each other's humanity, generate a product that can be appreciated by others, and contribute something beautiful to the community.

"Lasting change has to be cultural," noted Lucas. And that is precisely what PCAP is working relentlessly to do – change the culture of mass incarceration and transform the lives of everyone touched by it.



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Are you a homeless veteran in Washtenaw County?

The Washtenaw County Department of Veterans Affairs assists county veterans and their dependents in the pursuit of all veteran related benefits, including those related to the following:

- Disability Compensation
- Pension
- Burial/Death
- Financial Assistance
- Housing
- Utilities
- Medical
- Transportation
- Education
- Insurance
- Home Loan Guarantees

If you are a veteran in need of benefits
please call **(734) 973-4540.**

Days and Hours of Operation

Monday-Thursday:
Walk In Service: 8:30 am - 12:00 pm
Appointments: 1:00 pm to 5:30 pm
Closed for Lunch: 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
Closed: Fridays/Holidays

Resources for Homeless Washtenaw County Residents

Housing Access for Washtenaw County (HAWC) is the single point of entry for all shelters in the county-any resident in Washtenaw County experiencing a housing emergency can call. **(734) 961-1999**

Delonis Center offers emergency housing for both male and female homeless (90 days maximum stay). **(734) 662-2829**

Father Patrick Jackson House (Father Pat's) is a non-denominational residential program serving homeless, pregnant and parenting adolescents and their children. **(734) 761-1440**

Interfaith Hospitality Network provides temporary shelter, food and support services in a caring atmosphere of dignity and safety. **(734) 822-0220**

Ozone House provides emergency shelters and other needs to homeless teens or young people in serious conflict with their families.

- Ann Arbor: **(734) 662-2265**
- 24 Hour Crisis Line (Ann Arbor): **(734) 662-2222**
- Ypsilanti: **(734) 485-2222**

SAFE House provides services for any person victimized in an intimate relationship that lives or works in Washtenaw County. **(734) 995-5444**

SOS Community Services Housing Crisis Services Team provides information and referral services, short-term crisis counseling, limited financial assistance when available, and coordination of services with other agencies for families who are experiencing housing difficulties. **(734) 961-1999**

Staples Family Center provides a 90 day program to single individual and families in order to help them become independent and assists with mainly with housing arrangement, in addition to employment and other related matters. **(734) 761-7750**

Avalon Housing develops and manages permanent affordable housing for people who are homeless and for people with very low incomes. Call for application information. **(734) 663-5858**

A Facebook riff

by Paula Anderson
Groundcover Vendor #157

"Each day of our lives we should be sharing seeds of love and happiness." – Jennifer Gayle, Facebook post

Kindness, tenderness and joys of life.

Not bitterness, not sadness, not hopelessness.

Just happiness.

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Celestial Light

by Susan Bourrie
Groundcover Contributor

Why must we put away the tree this
year

and pull the plug on its celestial light?

Why must we pack the tinsel and the
cheer

that keep away the darkness of the
night?

Why must the star whose glow is warm
and mild

Be snuffed out on a designated day
and memories of that Most Holy Child
who lies beneath it ever fade away?

Why must the peace of this beloved
season

be shelved like some discarded chil-
dren's toy?

Why must good will defer to solemn
reason

that says this world is not a place for
joy?

The faith and love that we all hold so
dear

are meant to last until this time next
year.

LOST HIS WAY

by Carolyn Petersen
Groundcover Contributor

1.

My uncle
has lost his mind
the first time noticed
was on the way home
from the golf course
he could not
find his way
couldn't explain
why he was
an hour late.

2.

He had been an engineer
for the Michigan Road Commission
every road in the state
was familiar to him
he loved secondary
less-traveled roads
Karl never lost his way
these roads were
more interesting
useful stuff
was around every curve
old school house
slate blackboards
became a new floor
a barn was building material
fresh roadkill deer
was jerky for hunting trips.

3.

Now . . . he is not even
frustrated
he lives in the moment
Karl recognizes his kids
but doesn't
know their names
he enjoys rides
on secondary roads
he asks over and over
"Do we have enough gas?
Are we lost?"

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Housing is a market problem in Washtenaw County

continued from page 2

housing subsidies are effectively wage subsidizers, and that high housing costs transfer the burden, leading to food insecurity, insufficient funds for child care, etc. The problem could be addressed upstream with a livable minimum wage. In fact, a study released by the Economic Policy Institute in mid-October shows that increasing the minimum wage from its current level of \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour would save the federal government more than \$7.6 billion dollars per year just from WIC, SNAP and cash assistance benefits currently paid to working people.)

Locally, homelessness is a market problem in Washtenaw County, according to Callan, and the impact of demand on the cost of housing is a critical component. The picture painted by czb, the consulting firm hired by the OCED to analyze the situation, is that for three-fifths of residents, countywide, housing costs exceed 30 percent of income, and for one-third of residents, it exceeds 50 percent of income.

Interestingly, in Ann Arbor and Pittsfield Township, housing demand

exceeds the supply by about 3,000 units, while in Ypsilanti and Ypsilanti Township, the supply exceeds demand by approximately 4,000 units. The resulting much-lower property values in Ypsilanti have led to a glut of investor-owned properties in Ypsilanti and the township. They are highly profit-driven and have a low commitment to the community.

Each high-wage job leads to an additional two or three lower-wage support jobs whose workers need somewhere to live. The dishwasher at a high-end restaurant, a trainer at Eastern Michigan University, and a private school assistant principal are all priced out of the Ann Arbor rental market. Ypsilanti and other outlying areas have become the affordable housing outlet, testified to by the rush hour traffic. If this trend continues, Ann Arbor will see increased congestion and higher service costs, and the area will become inhospitable to start-ups who need inexpensive space as they launch their businesses.

Washtenaw County Commissioner Yousef Rabhi's metaphor for our interdependence is a boat. "If you're on a boat and one side is sinking, it does no good to point to that side and say,

'You're sinking!' The whole boat will go down," said Rabhi.

Concentrating low-income housing in Ypsilanti further weakens the demand for other housing there, and the lower property values make it more difficult to fund schools and amenities. Low-wage earners are forced to choose between affordable housing and community-based quality of life and future opportunities for the family. A resident of Ypsilanti Township spoke up from the audience and pointed out another negative unintended consequence. Housing vouchers intended for use in Ann Arbor are used instead in the Ypsilanti area, thereby allowing landlords to inflate the cost of rentals, further squeezing unsubsidized low-wage earners out of the rental market. It also creates a strain for providing services to people who need to be in permanent supportive housing.

Looking at the constantly rising property values of Ann Arbor/Pittsfield Township as a resource (a "virtual ATM" in the words of the consultants), we have the resources to address the housing gap on our own, which is fortunate since the National Housing Trust is grossly underfunded and

struggles to address even housing for those with special needs. Since developers want to build here, the consultants advise us to use zoning ordinances to insist that multi-income housing being a component of any development in appropriate areas. Similar measures have proven successful in Austin, Seattle and New York City.

Responding to a question from the audience, the czb consultants admitted that a unified Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti school district would go a long way toward addressing the equity issues that impel many families to live in the Ann Arbor School District even though it consumes an inordinate amount of their income.

The consultants also pointed to the tough choices made by other cities that have succeeded in revitalizing themselves. Pittsburgh concentrated its resources around the institutions that naturally drew residents – Carnegie Mellon, the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Bank – and have realized that the worst blocks in the city. The city rebuilt itself as demand in the strengthened areas expanded outward. Ypsilanti might have to make similar choices to adequately address safety and other quality of life issues that would attract families and businesses.

However, the assets of Ypsi's more affluent neighbors can ameliorate the excising. Expansion of bus service was a good first step toward moving some of the housing demand from Ann Arbor to Ypsilanti. As noted in last month's Groundcover News Agency Spotlight about the Bryant Community Center, investing in troubled neighborhoods can lead to a significant drop in crime and rise in property values. Service clubs, universities and government units could work together to provide and expand services in community centers in key Ypsilanti neighborhoods where they are needed.

2015 International Network of Street Papers (INSP) conference

For the first time ever, the international gathering of street newspapers will be held in the United States. With the demise of the North American Street Newspaper Association (NASNA), this is a rare opportunity to exchange ideas with colleagues from around the country and the world.

Modern street newspapers got their start in Glasgow, Scotland. They spread throughout Europe and beyond to Australia, Japan, South Korea, Africa and North and South America. With the exception of the 2010 conference in Australia and the 2006 conference in Montreal, previous INSP conferences were all held in European locations.

All four of the Groundcover vendors who attended the 2011 NASNA conference in Nashville have continued to make significant contributions to the organization as writers, editor, board members and salespeople. They credit the conference with enhancing their skills and confidence, and would very much like to attend the upcoming Seattle conference. Newer vendors and volunteers, too, would like the opportunity to participate in the workshops and learn from their colleagues. We might even present in a workshop, ourselves!

While Seattle is far more accessible than Glasgow, it will still be an expensive journey. If you would like to help us get some folks there, you can send us a check (made out to Groundcover News and sent to 423 S. 4th Ave. Ann Arbor, MI, 48103), or donate through PayPal on our website (groundcovernews.org) and include a note that it is for travel to the INSP conference.

Cryptoquote Solution

Prejudice and passion and suspicion are more dangerous than the incitement of self-interest or the most stubborn adherence to real differences of opinion regarding rights.

— Elihu Root

1	3	7	6	5	8	2	4	9
8	4	2	7	9	1	3	5	6
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3	2	5	8	6	9	7	1	4
4	9	1	2	3	7	5	6	8
6	1	3	9	4	2	8	7	5
2	7	4	5	8	3	6	9	1
9	5	8	1	7	6	4	2	3

B	A	B	A			A	L	P	S		M	I	C	K
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E	X	A	M		C	L	O	C	K	G	A	B	L	E
A	L	T	O		O	L	N	E	Y		S	O	I	L
K	E	E	N		N	E	S	O			T	R	E	Y



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Christmas Pageant

3:00 p.m.

Candlelight Lessons and Carols

5:00 & 7:30 p.m.

Candlelight Communion

11:00 p.m.



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Eggnog French toast



by Lisa Sonnenburg
Groundcover Contributor

For an easy, festive morning brunch! Serves 6.

Ingredients

12 slices of light rye or French bread

2 eggs, slightly beaten

1½ cups eggnog

1½ teaspoons cinnamon

1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

Butter, oil or non-stick cooking spray

Directions

Whisk eggs, eggnog, cinnamon and pumpkin spice gently in a bowl until well-blended.

Lightly grease a frying pan or griddle with a bit of butter, oil or cooking spray.

Preheat the frying pan or griddle on medium-high heat, or alternatively, use an electric griddle and preheat to 300°F.

Pour eggnog mixture on a shallow plate and dip one slice of bread into it at a time, making sure each side is well-coated.

Put coated bread slices on skillet and cook, turning once, until golden-brown on each side.

Place cooked slices on a plate and cover with foil to keep warm until all slices are ready.

Serve with syrup, jam or powdered sugar on top (optional).



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WORDS LIKE
THAT?

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HEY ELLA...WHAT
WAS THAT WORD AGAIN?

